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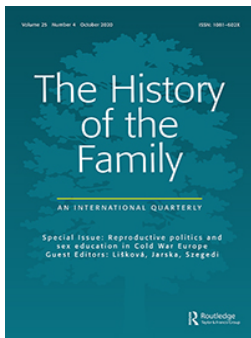
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ARTICLE



Pursuing pronatalism: non-governmental organisations and population and family policy in Sweden and Finland, 1940s–1950s

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to nuance notions of ‘pronatalism’ by applying it as an analytical concept for studying population and family policy Sweden and Finland in the 1940s and 1950s. This endeavour is pursued by analysing the ideologies and practices of three pronatalist non-governmental organisations from Sweden, Finland and Swedish Finland: the Swedish Population and Family Federation (Befolkningsförbundet Svenska Familjevärnet), the Finnish Population and Family Welfare League (Väestöliitto) and the Swedish Population Federation in Finland (Svenska Befolkningsförbundet i Finland, SBF). All three organisations promoted family-friendly policies, emphasised the need for widespread population policy education or ‘propaganda’, and framed pronatalist population policy as a collective issue of the nation or ‘people’, yet with different motivations and framings. Väestöliitto and SBF related the so-called population question to an external threat: the Soviet Union that threatened the geopolitical status of Finland, and the pressure of the Finnish-speaking majority, respectively. In addition, SBF saw that the Finland-Swedes were delusional about their demographic and cultural vulnerability and were hence causing their own demise. Familjevärnet, on the other hand, first and foremost connected family and population policy to the furthering of welfare, solidarity and democracy, primarily within Sweden but also transnationally. Respectively, the organisations also framed motherhood slightly differently. Väestöliitto and SBF portrayed procreation as a civic duty and motherhood as the most important role of women. Familjevärnet also viewed motherhood as an important and natural role for women, yet not as an exclusive civic duty. Rather, it emphasised that all citizens had a duty to contribute to a positive demographic development and family-friendly society, either through procreation or by partaking in the cost of bringing up children.

KEYWORDS

Pronatalism; maternalism; population policy; family policy; Sweden; Finland

1. Introduction

This article examines pronatalist ideas as a part of population and family policy development in Sweden and Finland in the 1940s and 1950s. Many researchers have taken note of

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the 'Nordic model' of family policy, marriage and gender equality, which points to a similar historical background. During the twentieth century, all Nordic countries enacted similar marriage laws with both egalitarian and eugenic features and complementing sterilisation laws, as well as implemented 'family-friendly' public health and social policies, like prenatal and maternal care and child benefits (e.g., Bradshaw & Hatland, 2007; Ellingsæter & Leira, 2006; Melby et al., 2001; Melby et al., 2008). The latter measures have been seen to exemplify pronatalist policies, i.e., policies for encouraging reproduction (e.g., Heitlinger, 1991; Kramer, 2014; Lovett, 2007; Pendelton, 1978).

Our aim in this article is two-fold. Firstly, we wish to nuance the analytical concept of pronatalism by historicising debates and developments in population and family policy in Finland and Sweden; in other words, we investigate how pronatalist ideas have been manifested in different historical, political and cultural settings. Secondly, we wish to highlight the role of non-governmental organisations in the formation of population and family policy. We pursue this dual endeavour by analysing the ideologies and practices of three Nordic non-governmental organisations that have been labelled pronatalist (Berg, 2009; Bergenheim, 2017; Helén & Yesilova, 2006; Klockar Linder, 2018), namely, the Swedish Population and Family League (Befolkningsförbundet Svenska Familjevårnet), the Finnish Population and Family Welfare League (Väestöliitto) and the Swedish Population Federation in Finland (Svenska Befolkningsförbundet i Finland). The organisations were established in the early 1940s with similar aims: to increase birth rates by promoting positive family values and supporting the interests of families with (many) children. All three organisations had significant connections to the state and commercial actors, and they came to influence the debates on as well as the outline of population and family policy in Finland and Sweden, respectively. We look at the organisations' activities during the 1940s and early 1950s – a period often known as the formative years of modern Nordic family and welfare policy. Thus, the period coincides with the later part of 'the golden age of pronatalism' identified by Ann-Katrin Gembries (2018, p. 25), i.e., the 1920–1950s.

The connection between pronatalism and population and family policy is widely acknowledged in literature: scholars have studied the pronatalist features of population and family policy in various historical and national contexts (e.g., Bergenheim, 2017; Camiscioli, 2009; Forcucci, 2010; Ginsborg, 2014; Haavet, 2006; Hoff, 2012; Hoffmann, 2000; Horn, 1991; Lovett, 2007; Nash, 1991; Pine, 1997; Quine, 1996; Randall, 2011; van der Klein et al., 2012). The interconnections between pronatalism, eugenics, and the historical development of the nation-state and welfare state have likewise been thoroughly explored (e.g., Bashford & Levine, 2010; Björkman, 2011; Broberg & Roll-Hansen, 2005; Kline, 2001; Spektorowski & Ireni Saban, 2014; Spektorowski & Mizrahi, 2004; Yuval-Davis, 1997). Many scholars have also recognised the role of pronatalist social movements, philanthropists, voluntary and religious associations and other non-governmental organisations in the development of population and family policies (e.g., Brown & Ferree, 2005; Heitlinger, 1991; Koven & Michel, 1990; Pedersen, 1993; Pine, 1997; Quine, 1996; Yuval-Davis, 1997).

The literature on different aspects and historical features of pronatalism is thus extensive; however, the kind of organised interests examined in this article have not previously been systematically studied as a part of Nordic population and family policies. Furthermore, as pointed out by Gembries (2018, p. 23), analyses of pronatalism and

phenomena such as birth control have mostly focused on the periods before 1945 and on 'pronatalist pressure groups and birth policies, rather than on discourses and values, and their studies are generally limited to one country'. We agree with Gembries on the need to widen studies to include more than one country as well as post-war periods, and we also agree on the need to explore pronatalism in terms of values and discourses. Nevertheless, we also claim that the organisations we study were more than mere pronatalist pressure groups – we rather view them as important population and family policy actors working on the grassroots level as well as the national decision-making level. As such, they were important in establishing population and family policy discourses and practices.

Our article addresses differences and similarities in practical as well as ideological aspects of the organisations' pronatalist activities. Thus, by looking at two countries and three actors (Swedish, Finnish and Finland-Swedish), we hope to diversify the rather homogeneous picture of the development of population and family policy in the Nordic countries in international comparisons. Furthermore, we draw attention to somewhat understudied actors, as neither Familjevärnet nor SBF have been extensively studied – to our knowledge, this is the first study on the latter.¹ Väestöliitto, for its part, has previously attracted the interest of (Finnish) scholars (e.g., Bergenheim, 2017, 2018b; Helén, 1997; Helén & Yesilova, 2006; Nätkin, 1997), but it has not been studied in a comparative setting in regard to its Swedish and Finland-Swedish sister organisations.

2. Research problem, theoretical framework and source material

'Pronatalism' literally refers to the promotion of natality (cf. antinatalism). Given that the outspoken purpose of the organisations was to advocate the birth of more children, it seems accurate to characterise them as pronatalist. However, in accordance with the conceptual history approach outlined below, the concept pronatalism cannot be assumed to consist of a ready-made set of ideas and principles, motives, means or and goals, nor that it is universally and trans-historically applicable. Instead, we set out to investigate how ideas, principles and concepts usually understood to fall under the umbrella of pronatalism were articulated, represented and constructed by the historical actors (i.e., the organisations) – thereby nuancing the notion of pronatalism and its history.

In this task, we are particularly attentive regarding concepts and rhetoric. In line with the tradition of conceptual and intellectual history, we distinguish between historical/empirical concepts and analytical concepts. *Historical concepts* refer to the historical actors' own vocabulary, which forms a part of our study subject; *analytical concepts*, for their part, are used by researchers for interpreting and studying historical concepts. Historical concepts hence should not be taken at face value or be defined beforehand; rather, their meanings and uses are the result of analysis (Bergenheim et al., 2018). Analytical concepts and frameworks, on the other hand, should be defined or reflected upon by the researcher applying them.

The term pronatalism peaked in the early 1970s and has mainly been used by scholars – it is therefore foremost an analytical term. Some scholars have gone beyond the literal and rather simplistic definition of pronatalism and have sought to discuss and define pronatalism as a multifaceted phenomenon that operates on various levels (from the individual to state-level), entails a variety of cultural, political and ideological ideas,

involves diverse actors, and hence manifests itself differently depending on time and context (Brown & Ferree, 2005; Heitlinger, 1991; Lovett, 2007, 2010). A closely related concept is maternalism, which likewise addresses the core theme of motherhood and reproduction. It revolves around the tension between the feminine private (maternal, domestic) and the masculine public (state, workplace, marketplace) – in other words, around the role of and relationship between femininity and motherhood in society (Koven & Michel, 1990; Plant & van der Klein, 2012). Pronatalism and maternalism hence both revolve around reproductive health, which we use as an umbrella term to denote medical and health policy issues related to reproduction, from conception to postnatal health (including abortion, contraceptives, sterility and STIs).

Whereas ‘pronatalism’ is often used in a self-explanatory manner as an analytical tool, framework or attribute for studying reproductive policies, ‘maternalism’ tends to be discussed and problematised more in depth. Plant and van der Klein (2012) explicitly identify maternalism as an analytical concept not used by historical actors. Furthermore, they recognise the value of a broad, diverse and ‘slippery’ concept for analysing complex and multifaceted phenomena – a notion that we respectively extend to the concept of pronatalism.

However, we slightly divert from the condition formulated by Plant and van der Klein (2012, p. 10) that ‘the scholar who employs [the concept of maternalism] is clear about her or his own working definition’, but rather approach pronatalism and maternalism as a nuanced spectrum. We understand the concepts as a framework for identifying, interpreting and explaining similarities and differences in historical phenomena related to the intertwined ideas of womanhood and motherhood, ethnicity/race and nation in Sweden and Finland. We therefore are deliberately not committed to a specific definition of either pronatalism or maternalism, nor do we aspire to formulate narrower or more precise definitions. Rather, taking their broad and ambiguous definitions as our starting point, we demonstrate examples of the different forms and nuances pronatalism and maternalism can entail in Nordic nations.

We approach this task by examining how the organisations described their activities and ambitions, identified ideals and threats related to ‘the population’, and defined the relationship between the individual and the society and their respective responsibilities and rights. The actors we study did not use the words ‘pronatalism’ or ‘reproductive health’; rather, our task is to outline the actors’ empirical vocabulary, or semantic field, consisting of concepts like ‘population policy’, ‘family policy’, ‘natality propaganda’, ‘child limit’, etc. – i.e., words and concepts used by the organisations to articulate their pronatalist endeavours. This is in accordance with the conceptual history approach, which emphasises language as part of political struggles and understands it as not just passively reflecting ‘reality’ but partaking in shaping it (Koselleck, 2002, 2004; Skinner, 1999). Furthermore, we look at how the organisations reflected on their own endeavours, as this indicates a continuous consideration regarding the adequacy and legitimacy of measures for promoting natality. Put in more analytical terms, we argue that this exemplifies how the actors themselves problematised the idea of pronatalism. Thus, the article addresses the following sets of core questions:

The first set of questions looks into ideals, ambitions and concerns regarding natality: How did the organisations articulate and conceptualise goals and threats related to increasing/decreasing birth rates? The second set deals with the organisations’

conceptualisations of population policy: What was meant by ‘population policy’, how was it related to other policy strands and who was the target of these policies? The third set of questions relates to how the organisations profiled themselves as advocates of increasing birth rates and ‘positive population policy’. Building on these themes, we discuss who were included in concepts like ‘population’ or ‘people’, how population (policy) was positioned in regard to matters like class, ethnicity and nationalism, and how notions of femininity and motherhood were constructed.

As source material we use both published and unpublished (archival) sources.² The archive materials of Västöliitto and SBF are vast; they consist of minutes and appendices, annual reports and action plans as well as correspondence, programmes and charter drafts; a similar material – although less substantial – also exists pertaining to Familjevärnet.³ The published material of all three organisations include programmes, brochures and pamphlets as well as annual reports; Västöliitto and SBF have also published jubilee publications, annals and studies. The materials also differ in some respects. While Västöliitto and SBF published studies and booklet series, Familjevärnet only published a few brochures; instead, its main organ was a quarterly member bulletin issued 1941–48.⁴ A potential consequence of this difference is that the Finnish and Finland-Swedish organisations stand out as more homogenous compared to the Swedish, as the bulletin format enables more and potentially conflicting voices. In analysing our material in accordance with our research questions and conceptual history approach, we consider all types of materials as well as all statements by individual authors in the material to reflect notions and viewpoints endorsed by each organisation.

3. Historical, (inter)national and political context

As modern nation-states began to take form in the nineteenth century, the population became a national interest and source of various concerns. Antinatalist movements, such as the British Malthusian League and similar neo-Malthusian organisations across Europe, warned about the unsustainability of overpopulation and its negative social and economic consequences. Neo-Malthusians were especially concerned about the growing and increasingly impoverished working-class population, and advocated for regulating the birth rates through birth control. Pronatalists, on the other hand, perceived the population as a productive resource for nation-building as well as international and imperialist competition, whereby they advocated procreation and improving the health of mothers and infants. (Michel, 2011; Quine, 1996).

However, not all births were considered desired. Pronatalists and anti-natalists alike often perceived white, middle-class Christians as the ideal and norm, and a common goal was to prevent the population’s degeneration. Thus, pronatalism revolved around encouraging certain groups to procreate – the middle and upper classes as well as other parts of the population deemed ‘fit’ – rehabilitating and assimilating socially ‘abnormal’ and ‘maladjusted’ individuals and groups into the ‘normal’ population, and controlling the procreation of the ‘unfit’ through eugenics (e.g., sterilisation and abortion programmes). (See, e.g., Kraus, 1993; Michel, 2011; Pietikäinen, 2017). In other words, while antinatalism and pronatalism appear to be seemingly opposite ideas, they contain similar goals, i.e., defining and regulating desired and undesired population growth. Neo-Malthusian ideas gradually lost popularity after World War I and the Great Depression. As

nations focused on (re)building their societies and economies, establishing (new) national identities and maintaining military preparedness in a reorganised Europe, declining birth rates became a wide-spread concern (Michel, 2011).

During the twentieth century, pronatalist population policy was implemented in a variety of forms and for various means in different countries. Families were supported through social and health policy measures in the framework of the population crisis in republican France, socialist societies in the Soviet Union, fascist dictatorships in Italy, Germany and Spain, as well as the budding Nordic welfare states in Scandinavia and Finland. Several countries (France, the Soviet Union, Spain, Germany, Italy, among others) also introduced motherhood rewards for mothers with many children, sometimes with positive eugenic features like health and heredity criteria. In contrast, Western democracies with liberal traditions that emphasised individual rights, such as Great Britain and the United States, relied on covert strategies like maternalist and nationalist rhetoric and self-governance rather than government programmes. Other pronatalist measures included the wide-spread ban and/or strict regulation of abortion and contraceptives (in, e.g., Great Britain, France, Italy, the Soviet Union and the Nordic countries). Furthermore, widely-adopted antinatalist features for controlling the 'quality' included eugenic and racial policies, ranging from marriage impediments to compulsory sterilisations and abortions as well as immigration bans (in the United States, Germany and the Nordic countries, among others).⁵

The demographic situation and population policy was debated in Finland and Sweden since the late nineteenth century, but it flared in both countries in the 1930s. In Sweden, the population debate of the mid-twentieth century is commonly associated with the Social Democratic couple Alva and Gunnar Myrdals' book *Crisis in the Population Question* (A. Myrdal & G. Myrdal, 1934), characterised as a 'pronatalist bestseller' that turned population policy into a keyword for the decade to follow (Edling et al., 2014, p. 17; see also Carlson, 1990). In Finland, demographic forecasts sparked similar concerns: they indicated that Finland's population growth would start to decline in the 1970s and would never exceed four million (Modeen, 1934a, 1934b). The Finnish debate was also influenced by the Myrdals' publication and the Swedish discussion. In the mid- and late 1930s, Swedish and Finnish governments appointed state committees for investigating different aspects of the 'population question' and suggesting political reforms. State committees were an important part of the political system in both countries, and the population committees of the 1930s and 1940s influenced the shape of population and family policy and created a long-lasting 'discursive framework' (Lundqvist & Roman, 2008, p. 219; see also Wisselgren, 2008; Rainio-Niemi, 2010). In both countries, the late 1930s and 1940s saw the introduction of various family-friendly policies – e.g., maternity benefits and universal child allowances, prenatal and maternal clinics, and free school meals – as well as eugenic policies like sterilisation programmes and marriage impediments (Berg, 2009; Bergenheim, 2017; Broberg & Tydén, 2005; Laurent, 2012; Nätkin, 1997; Hatje, 1974; Källemark, 1980; Lundqvist, 2007; Hietala, 2001, 2005).

In discussing why the United States refrained from launching 'explicitly pronatalist measures' in the 1930s, Derek S. Hoff suggest this is due to 'anti-statism'. He points to a paradox within population policy in democratic societies, namely that 'it asks that individuals trained to be self-governing, acquisitive, and atomistic consider children a public good' (Hoff, 2012, p. 83; see also Lovett, 2007). The relationship between state

and individual in Nordic welfare states, on the other hand, has been conceptualised differently. Pauli Kettunen has described the Nordic society as a moral relationship between the state and people/individuals, as a 'virtuous circle between economy, politics and ethics, based on class compromise' (Kettunen, 1997). This relationship between state and individual is reflected in legislation and policies as well. However, state, nation or society should not be uncritically conflated (Kettunen, 2011; Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002); the relationship between state, national and cultural ideas and civil society is complex and fluctuating, and regional variations and transnational influences have also played their parts in 'national' developments.

Systemic and moral hierarchies have also varied in the historical relationships between the individual, state and society: for example, whether the interest of the collective (e.g., the society or state) has prevailed over the good of the individual, or vice versa. Traditionally, collectivism has legitimised state interventionism and the control of individuals' bodies and social relationships (Bergenheim et al., 2018; Spektorowski & Mizrahi, 2004). However, the 1940s–1960s have been identified as a 'transition period' from collectivism to individualism, during which ideas and policies included features from collectivism as well as individualism (Bergenheim et al., 2018; see also Gembries, 2018). In this article, we thus look at a time period that simultaneously saw an upswing in pronatalism while the relationship between the individual, the society and the state was in a state of flux.

While Finland and Sweden had similar political cultures and population policy debates and developments, the countries differ in certain other historical aspects – not least war experiences. During the Second World War, Finland underwent two wars against the Soviet Union (the Winter War 1939–40 and the Continuation War 1941–44). The wars eventually resulted in the Soviet Union's annexation of large areas of Eastern and Northern Finland and the evacuation and resettlement of nearly 10% of Finland's population. The implementation of population policy stagnated during war time, but the geopolitical threat further intensified the debate and legitimated post-war policies. Unlike its Nordic neighbours, Sweden was not involved in the war, but remained officially neutral. Nevertheless, Sweden was not unaffected – it maintained high military preparedness throughout the war and had to postpone proposed and planned reforms.

In this article, we treat Swedish Finland as its own entity or 'nation' in the sense of *Kulturstaat* (i.e., not be confused with 'nation state'). Finland is a bilingual country, with Finnish and Swedish being the official languages. Swedish Finland (adjective form: Finland-Swedish) refers to the Swedish-speaking population in Finland, around 9.5% of the population in the early 1940s, as well as the areas inhabited by Finland-Swedes along the South and West coast. While municipalities with a Swedish-speaking majority are officially bilingual or monolingually Swedish-speaking, Swedish Finland was (and is) not an independent state or autonomous region,⁶ but a part of Finland, and Finland-Swedes are Finnish citizens. Nonetheless, the Finland-Swedes have their own distinct culture, which in part dates back to the era when Finland was a part of Sweden (until 1809). The upper classes have also traditionally been Swedish-speakers, which likewise dates back to the Swedish rule. However, the Finland-Swedish population was not homogeneous, but also included a large number of agrarian and working-class people.

In Swedish Finland, the demographic development of the Swedish-speaking population in Finland had been a concern of the Swedish-speaking political and cultural elite

already since the early twentieth century. It was amplified by the Finnish Civil War (1918), which the Swedish-speaking upper classes interpreted as a class conflict caused by the inferior Finnish-speaking lower classes or 'race' (Mattila, 1999). Finland-Swedish population policy ideas were hence traditionally closely intertwined with racial hygiene, ethnicity and classist notions (Bergenheim, 2018a).

4. Population policy organisations in Sweden, Finland, Swedish Finland

As with the historical and political context, an outline of the Finnish, Finland-Swedish and Swedish organisations reveals both similarities and differences. All three were founded in the early 1940s – the Finnish Västöliitto and the Swedish Befolkningsförbundet Svenska Familjevärnet⁷ (hereafter: Familjevärnet) in 1941, the Finland-Swedish Svenska befolkningsförbundet i Finland (SBF) in 1942 – with the core objective to elevate the number and quality of the population in their respective nations.⁸

One notable resemblance is the professional profile of the organisations. Many of the founders and board members held central policy and expert positions, e.g., as politicians, state officials, academics and physicians. The expertise represented was orientated towards social and medical sciences, such as demography, statistics and paediatrics. The chairs of the Finland-Swedish SBF and the Swedish Familjevärnet were professional statisticians: SBF's leaders Gunnar Modeen and Gunnar Fougstedt (chairs 1946–51 and 1951–61, respectively) were both employed at the Finnish Central Bureau of Statistics, whilst the president of the Swedish organisation, Sten Wahlund, was head of the Stockholm Statistical Bureau. Wahlund was also a politician, representing the Agrarian Party in first chamber of Parliament since 1944.⁹ This combination of political engagement and social science expertise is paralleled by the chair of Västöliitto, V. J. Sukselainen (1941–71), who also led the Agrarian Party 1945–64 and served twice as Prime Minister in the 1950s and 1960s, among other roles.¹⁰ Other prominent members of the organisations included Västöliitto's executive manager Heikki von Hertzen (1943–65),¹¹ SBF's chair Harry Federley (1942–44)¹² and Familjevärnet's founder Per Johannes¹³ and vice-president Folke Borg.¹⁴

Västöliitto and SBF had a similar organisational structure and political profile. Both were non-governmental umbrella organisations for associations involved in population policy. Their memberships included social and health policy associations as well as politically engaged associations, both left- and right-wing, the latter often with a nationalist stance. Familjevärnet, on the other hand, was not an umbrella organisation, but framed itself as a popular movement relying heavily on support from the public.¹⁵ However, it cooperated closely with other associations, and many of the leading members had additional organisational engagements, making the borders between Familjevärnet and other actors sometimes hard to detect.

None of the organisations were officially affiliated with any political parties. Yet, the overwhelming majority of the key actors in Västöliitto and SBF (executive managers, chairs and board members) were affiliated with nationalist organisations and/or centre-right parties, such as the Agrarian League, Coalition Party or Swedish People's Party. This was reflected in the organisations' ideas and activities, whereby we consider them to be mainly conservative/bourgeois social reformist organisations. The political profile of Familjevärnet is harder to pinpoint. Like its Finnish and Finland-Swedish counterparts, it claimed to represent interests above the political party lines. According to

characterisations in previous research, Familjevärnet was a politically conservative organisation whose members were extra-parliamentary population policy activists with eugenic and nationalist engagements (Hatje, 1974). Such a description is valid to some extent; however, Familjevärnet's members also included Agrarian and Social Democratic actors, whereby it had a more eclectic political profile.

A mutual feature of the organisations is their ambivalent governmental status. Despite profiling themselves as non-governmental organisations, both Västoliitto and Familjevärnet were closely engaged in governmental collaboration. The board of Västoliitto included two representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs, which gave it a half-governmental position. Familjevärnet overlapped with the Swedish Population Committee, a second state committee appointed in autumn 1941 (not to be confused with the Population Commission of 1935) as several people were simultaneously operating within both, among them Sten Wahlund and Curt Gyllenswärd.¹⁶ SBF did not achieve a similar half-governmental status as its Finnish sister-organisation, largely because its operations were strictly limited to Swedish Finland. Nonetheless, the organisation was indirectly connected to governmental institutions and forums through prominent figures like Gunnar Fougstedt, who chaired the Finnish Population Committee, and Gunnar Modeen, who calculated the demographic forecasts in the 1930s.

The organisations eventually had different live spans. Västoliitto still is active, albeit with a different profile: it is no longer engaged in comprehensive population policy, but provides couples' counselling services and fertility treatments, as well as runs a research institute for population studies, family sociology and sexology. The Finland-Swedish organisation ceased in 1985, and the Swedish organisation dissolved around 1950. The organisations thus had different potentials and impacts in shaping population and family policies from the 1950s and onwards, an issue we will address briefly in the conclusion.

In the following sections, we present our findings and analyses of the empirical material. We devote two sections to examining the organisations, one section dealing with the Finnish Västoliitto and the Finland-Swedish SBF, the second with the Swedish Familjevärnet. In the section discussing Västoliitto and SBF, we take the previous findings of Sophy Bergenheim (2017) as starting point. The sections are divided into sub-sections following a similar structure. First, we discuss how the organisations formulated problems, causes and threats as well as solutions relating to the 'population question'. We then analyse notions of motherhood and reproductive health; we also relate them to attempts to promote reproduction, and to notions of the duties and responsibilities of the individual and the society. Lastly, we investigate how the organisations articulated their pronatalist ideals and ambitions in the post war years, i.e. the late 1940s and 1950s, in order to identify changes and continuities in the organisations' framings. In the concluding section, we relate the organisations to each other, compare and combine our principal findings and use them to further nuance the concepts pronatalism and maternalism.

5. Västoliitto (Finland) and SBF (Swedish Finland)

5. 1. Formulating problems, identifying causes, outlining threats

Västoliitto and SBF alike crystallised their core agenda into the concept 'population question' (Eklund, 1944; Västoliitto, 1942). It was used as a self-evident representation of

the notion that the population was too small and birth rates were declining – in SBF's case, the declining natality of the Swedish-speaking population in relation to the Finnish-speaking population – and that the physical, mental, social and moral health of the population was likewise in danger. In short, it was about the survival of the people and the quantity and quality of the population.

The population question in Finland is, in short, a question of *our people's survival*. (Väestöliitto, 1942, p. 18) [Original emphasis.]

We are driving ourselves to extinction. (Eklund, 1944, p. 17)

Väestöliitto's stance was fuelled by an 'underdog trauma' following the Winter War: an alarmed notion that the Finnish population was too small considering Finland's geopolitical vulnerability, neighbouring a powerful and hostile country. It placed the blame for Finland's demographic predicament on the short-sighted self-interest of individuals. More precisely, of healthy women of fertile age; women of middle and upper classes, in particular, had gained an undeserved increase in their standard of living by adhering to the 'child limit', i.e., by voluntarily refraining from procreation. This, in turn, was interpreted as a breach against the individual's (more precisely, the woman's) responsibility towards the nation and society (Bergenheim, 2017).¹⁷

In a programme draft outlined in 1942 by SBF's secretary Ole Eklund,¹⁸ SBF emphasised that Väestöliitto and SBF complement each other and share similar practical programmes. Nonetheless, it criticised Väestöliitto's stance for being too harsh. Instead, it sympathised with individuals and saw striving for a better life as inherently human. The programme argued that society had failed to meet the material needs of its citizens, which placed families with children in a disadvantaged position. The programme hence pointed out that it was unreasonable to 'make propaganda' for increasing natality as long as it required, in practice, that people willingly settled or aimed for a lower standard of living.¹⁹ However, in SBF's published pamphlet (1944) that outlined its programme and agenda, the message was by and large the same as Väestöliitto's: individuals (particularly better-off higher classes) were shamed for pursuing 'egoistic' and 'materialist' aspirations by refraining from procreation, hence neglecting their civic duty (Eklund, 1944, p. 20). The programme draft was single-handedly outlined by Ole Eklund, who was one of the few left-wing actors in SBF (if not the only one); it is possible that the draft was simply too leftist for the organisation's centre-right majority.

While the selfish individual was seen as the main culprit, both organisations also saw that cultural, ideational as well as systemic/institutional factors were to blame. Cultural and ideational factors included hostile attitudes towards families as well as neo-Malthusianism and other 'uneducated' views on population policy (Eklund, 1944; Nieminen, 1946).²⁰ Systemic and institutional factors included insufficient policies for supporting families, as well as urbanisation, which 'destroyed families' and crumbled family traditions and healthy agrarian lifestyles (Eklund, 1944; von Hertzen, 1942).²¹ In short, both organisations heavily criticised that family formation had become a social and economic burden, and they attributed the 'population crisis' to individuals as well as the society.

While both organisations spoke of quantity as well as quality or health, Väestöliitto was adamant regarding reproductive health issues. Maternal and infant mortality rates were

very high in 1940s Finland: maternal mortality was around 400 women per 100,000 live births annually and infant mortality around 60 infants per 1,000 live births annually – both rates were twice as high as in Sweden.²² (In 2017, maternal and infant mortality rates in Finland were 7.9 per 100,000 live births and 2 per 1,000 live births, respectively.²³) In order to address these issues Västöliitto promoted prenatal and maternal clinics, maternity hospitals and care as well as maternity and child care education (Västöliitto, 1942).

‘Criminal abortions’ were a core issue for Västöliitto, and anti-abortion work was a central focus point during the 1940s and 1950s. The organisation condemned abortions since they not only terminated pregnancies, but botched abortions also entailed risks for sterility or even death (Västöliitto, 1942).²⁴ Finland legalised abortion in 1950, i.e., relatively early compared to many other countries, but Finnish legislation was very conservative: it had marked eugenic features, and it medicalised and politicised abortion. It was hence not an issue of individual choice, but a national and collective issue, and it served as a tool for subjecting pregnancy and motherhood to expert and legal control (see also Helén & Yesilova, 2006). Västöliitto’s and Finland’s case in fact resembles Radka Dudová’s findings of Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic (Dudová, 2018). However, Finland’s legislation and praxis cannot be explained by the absence of women’s movements or civil movements, which Dudová connects with the advocacy for civil rights and bodily autonomy, or ‘Western trends’ – rather, Finnish women’s movements were traditionally dominated by bourgeois women with ties to Christian communities (also cf. Heinemann, 2018).

Sterilisation was another core issue for Västöliitto, since the organisation argued that the population’s quality was not sufficiently controlled. ‘Low-quality’ individuals – people with hereditary mental and physical illnesses and other ‘asocial’ and ‘dependant’ individuals²⁵ – were seen as social and moral threats and economic burdens to the already strained population. Throughout the 1940s, Västöliitto promoted a more efficient sterilisation law for prohibiting the ‘hereditarily flawed’ from procreating. The sterilisation legislation was reformed and harmonised with the abortion law, i.e., very strict policy with eugenic features (eugenic sterilisations reached their peak in the 1950s and 1960s) (Mattiila, 1999). Sterilisations were, of course, negative racial hygiene, but Västöliitto estimated that a stricter sterilisation policy would not have a significant impact on absolute birth rates.²⁶ It was hence deemed an antinatalist concession worth making for the sake of population quality.

Other issues related to reproductive health included advocating for a new law on STIs (Västöliitto, 1942); the law was reformed and expanded in 1952 in line with the general goal to control infectious diseases (and their carriers) (Harjula, 2007, pp. 69, 72). Västöliitto also recognised involuntary infertility as a public health issue pertaining to the ‘population question’.²⁷ However, Västöliitto consider other matters to be more pressing; it eventually established its own infertility clinic, but only in 1986.

SBF also expressed concern for the Finland-Swedish population’s health; nonetheless, the organisation was, in practice, more concerned about the declining quantity and ethnocultural quality of the Swedish-speaking population. The preparatory committee for establishing SBF outlined that the organisation should primarily focus on the ‘natality problem’, thereafter on the Swedish-speaking population’s emigration to Sweden as well as ‘linguistically mixed marriages’. These issues were complemented with an emphasis on the standard of living of Swedish-speaking families.²⁸ In its focus on social issues rather

than health, SBF clearly differed from the health-orientated Folkhälsan, the Public Health Association of Swedish Finland, a prominent association in Swedish Finland (Bergenheim, 2018a). This distinction was perhaps deliberate in order to demarcate separate roles for the associations.

In terms of threats, i.e., reasons why the 'population question' was a problem, Väestöliitto and SBF both linked demographic development with the survival and defence of the 'population' and 'nation'. Of course, what these terms referred to differed. For Väestöliitto, the nation referred to the Finnish nation-state. 'Population' referred to the Finnish population and people, which did not include any explicit distinctions between minorities, e.g., the Sami, or other population groups – this did not imply inclusion, however, but rather exclusion through silence (Bergenheim, 2018a). As the core threat to the nation and population, Väestöliitto framed the Soviet Union (Sukselainen, 1942; Väestöliitto, 1942)²⁹ – everything about population policy was linked to Finland's geopolitical situation. Poor economic development was also highlighted as an important issue caused by the 'population question', but that was likewise linked to the hostile neighbour: Finland would not be able to withstand military aggression with a small population and weak economy.

In contrast, for SBF, 'population' entailed clear demarcations: it referred only to the Swedish-speaking population and people. In analytical terms, 'nation' referred to Swedish Finland, whose population was the main concern. Empirically, however, SBF also used the terms 'nation' and 'realm' (*rike*) to refer to Finland as a country or nation.³⁰ Unlike Väestöliitto, SBF hardly mentioned the Soviet Union, but rather saw the 'population question' to revolve around internal or, at most, national threats. SBF's main threat scenario was the shrinking proportion of the Swedish-speaking population and the mixing of Finnish and Finland-Swedish 'races'. The biggest obstacle was thus the ignorance of a population that acted against its own interest by not procreating enough with their own kind (Eklund, 1944). The Finnish-speaking majority hence formed an implicit national threat,³¹ but SBF was very careful in its formulations as to avoid a separatist and anti-Finland image (Eklund, 1944)³² (in contrast to Folkhälsan and its vocal minority nationalism).

5. 2. *Constructing ideals, formulating solutions*

Drawing on international maternalism literature, Finnish researchers have applied and discussed concepts such as the myth, norm or elements of motherhood (e.g., Berg, 2008; Nätkin, 1997, 2003; Vuori, 2003, 1999) as well as the home cult (e.g., Nätkin, 2003; Palomäki, 2011; Saarikangas, 1993) in analysing the cultural construction of motherhood and maternalist ideologies and policies in Finland.

The motherhood myth constructed an idealised form of motherhood. It tied femininity and maternal traits intrinsically together by presenting motherhood and maternal instincts as natural to women, as the most 'pure' form of womanhood. It also represented women, mothers in particular, as morally pure beings. This created a specific societal role for women: they served as the moral backbone of the society, raised new, physically and morally healthy citizens, and thereby contributed to the construction of a new nation. The motherhood myth was hence based on bourgeois ideas of motherhood and family: heterosexual marriage, traditional family and gender models and the nuclear family.

The home cult, likewise based on an idealised and bourgeois notion of motherhood, can be seen as the motherhood myth's material extension. The home cult was markedly

anti-urbanist: cities with their crowded dwellings and working mothers obscured the boundaries of familial privacy and gender roles. Cities were hence portrayed as detrimental to the nuclear family, whereas the agrarian lifestyle and male breadwinner model were heralded as 'healthy'. The home cult advocated for town planning, housing policy and garden cities that favoured single-family houses and practical homes for housewives. Such policies were thought to normalise and enable motherhood, the nuclear family and high birth rates – it hence combined pronatalist population policy and family policy with housing policy and architecture.

Both Väestöliitto and SBF advocated the motherhood myth and home cult. They idealised mothers as the moral backbone and future of society and portrayed motherhood as the most important role and calling of women. The nuclear family was seen to enable the housewife to fully dedicate herself to her family – and thereby her nation, as procreation and child-rearing was framed as the civic duty of women. Both organisations also made use of militarist rhetoric: Väestöliitto represented the procreative duty as analogous to men's military service, and SBF portrayed family loans for young couples as a "defence loan" in the most appropriate sense of the word' (Eklund, 1944, p. 26).

An expecting mother is the most presentable among women. She is the citizen who bears the future of our folk beneath her heart. (Eklund, 1944, p. 20.)

Motherhood is the great task of the active years in a woman's life. Other work is done only after she has fulfilled this national duty. (Jalas, 1941, p. 42.)

Giving birth is the most valuable national [military] service a woman can do for her country, and it is by no means effortless or danger-free.³³

As solutions for addressing the 'population question' (and for normalising ideals), Väestöliitto and SBF alike proposed establishing four children per family as the minimum norm; Väestöliitto even demanded that the *preferred* number of children was six or over (Eklund, 1944; Väestöliitto, 1942). This goal was to be achieved through 'positive population policy'; for both organisations, this referred to family-friendly policies that redistributed the burden of child-rearing across the society, like social benefits and family taxation. The rhetoric also reflected a condemning attitude towards the 'child limit'; benefits and family taxation were mostly framed as support for families with children, but the organisations also emphasised that voluntary childlessness should not entail financial gain. Väestöliitto also advocated for better maternal and child health care.

As their own task in pursuing these goals, Väestöliitto and SBF emphasised 'propaganda' ('population (policy) propaganda', 'natality propaganda' etc.) and 'education' (Finnish: *valistus*, Swedish: *upplysning*). This referred to education and research on national and grassroots-level for correcting misconceptions and negative attitudes towards families among citizens, employers and decision-makers (Bergenheim, 2017; Eklund, 1944; Väestöliitto, 1942).

5. 3. Post-war pronatalism: from alarmism to family-friendliness?

In the late 1940s, birth rates were on the rise, sterilisation and abortion legislation was being revised, and prenatal and maternal health care reforms were underway. Väestöliitto hence seemed to conclude that the development was on the right track, and it eased up

on its alarmist framing. Instead, it focused on supporting and maintaining the development through positive family policy, in which the society and state should recognise and carry its responsibility for creating conditions in which families could thrive (Väestöliitto, 1946a, 1946b). Väestöliitto crystallised its call for family-friendly attitudes as well as familial and marital happiness:

We do not want 'propaganda children' in a society that is unkind to them, nor in loveless homes in which they are not cherished! (Väestöliitto, 1946a, p. 3.)

SBF, however, remained rather critical and alarmist still in the early 1950s. It argued that the existing family policies simply were not enough: they did not meet actual needs, and raising children still entailed lower living standards (Aminoff, 1952; Fougstedt, 1952; Svenska befolkningsförbundet i Finland [SBF], 1946). SBF's chair Gunnar Fougstedt and deputy board member Torsten G. Aminoff³⁴ also warned that critique and optimism alike would obscure the value of accomplished measures and, more importantly, what still remained to be achieved – a positive development was not guaranteed (Aminoff, 1952; Fougstedt, 1953). Fougstedt further argued that Finland-Swedes had particular demographic problems compared to the Finnish population. On average, they had higher incomes, and could therefore afford medical care; they were hence in better health (including infants) and lived longer. However, since a larger proportion of Finland-Swedes lived in cities, their fertility rate was lower. This skewed the 'population pyramid' so that the population was growing disproportionately old (Fougstedt, 1953). In addition, linguistic and cultural mixing, or 'Finnicisation' (*förfinskning*), remained an issue (SBF, 1952).

Nonetheless, both organisations engaged in activities and 'propaganda' portrayed as family-friendly. For example, in the early 1950s, Väestöliitto and SBF jointly advocated for a tax reform for redistributing the burden of reproduction. The organisations now explicitly distanced themselves from their former punitive approach: SBF acknowledged that complex taxation systems created antagonisms and soured attitudes towards families (Aminoff, 1952), and Väestöliitto argued that old injustices towards families did not warrant new injustices towards singles (Väestöliitto, 1950).

Both organisations propagated the home cult through various housing policy debates and activities. Väestöliitto actively advocated anti-urbanist housing policy and national planning as well as garden cities as a solution to the housing shortage that hit families with children particularly hard (von Hertzen, 1946). In the 1950s, Väestöliitto embarked on its own housing project in the outskirts of Helsinki (Bergenheim, 2020). SBF published a hands-on domestic guide for young couples moving in together (SBF, 1945), as well as critical reports of the housing situation of Finland-Swedish families (Modeen, 1952) and warnings against the perils of urban life for the natality of Finland-Swedes (Fougstedt, 1953).

Both organisations also engaged in marriage counselling. Finnish services were offered from 1947 by Väestöliitto and the Church, and Swedish services since 1952 by SBF, Folkhälsan and Swedish Parish Workers' Association (Bergenheim, 2018a, 2018b). Both services hence involved population policy, public health and ecclesial actors. The marriage counselling services also had similar focus points: therapeutic counselling, education on marital life (i.e., inculcation of 'realistic' attitudes) as well as family planning and contraception (reserved only for married couples and marital happiness). The goal of the

counselling service was to normalise the motherhood myth and the nuclear family as well as to further pronatalism through positive measures. They were based on the core idea that happiness between couples (in which control over pregnancy could be an important factor) would eventually lead to more children (Bergenheim, 2018a; Helén, 1997). For SBF, propagating against mixed marriages through client selection and education was also a goal.

6. Befolkningsförbundet Svenska Familjevärnet (Sweden)

6. 1. *Framing the population question: problems and solutions*

Just like the Finnish organisations, it was the ‘population question’ and concern over falling birth rates that motivated the foundation of Familjevärnet. According to the appeal introducing the new organisation, only about two thirds of the children needed to maintain the population were actually born, and so the future of the Swedish people was threatened.³⁵ The problem had both quantitative and qualitative aspects and entailed central nationalist concerns, as made explicit in Curt Gyllenswärd’s straightforward solution:

The Swedish population question is and remains a Swedish question. Its only possible solution is an increase in birth rates: the birth of many Swedish children and good Swedish children. (Gyllenswärd, 1941, p. 4.)

From the perspective of Familjevärnet, a major threat against the Swedish population came from within: according to organisation founder Per Johannes, the Swedish people were ‘at war with themselves’ (Sverige på väg, 1941). The problem was conceptualised both as an issue regarding the Swedish people as a ‘folk’ and as a concern about the future national supply, i.e., how a decreasing working-age population could provide for the more numerous elderly. Ultimately, this would pose a threat for the living standards as well as the way of life of the Swedish people (Upplysning i befolkningsfrågan, 1943). That no group or strata of the Swedish population procreated to the extent required for maintaining the size of the population was, according to Familjevärnet, due to differences in living standard between, on the one hand, single individuals, childless couples and families with no or few children and, on the other hand, families with many children, rendering the latter economically and socially vulnerable. This difference, conceptualised as an inequality between ‘childless’, ‘child-poor’, and ‘child-rich’, was one of the main factors for the low birth rates and was thus a central cause in explaining the population question. Respectively, equalising between those groups by means of economical redistribution – enabled through tax reforms – was therefore key to solving the problem, making it more advantageous to have children than to be childless (Bengtson, 1941a; Gyllenswärd, 1941; Med sikte på framtiden, 1943; Wahlund, 1944c).

While Familjevärnet put some blame on egoistic and short-sighted individuals who refrained from having children – a criticism not least directed at persons in older generations – it did not systematically pinpoint a certain group as especially responsible. Its main emphasis was on economic, social and cultural factors that discriminated against families with children. The hardship of child-rich families was not conceptualised as a class-issue but as a problem found in all income groups and the organisation argued that it should be

a common interest for all citizens, regardless of age, income, marital status or number of children in one's own family, to equalise and to improve the situation for the families. However, it was the educated middle classes – clerks, academics, school teachers – and the agrarian part of the population who were placed at the core of the argumentation, both explicitly and implicitly: their procreation was a value that needed to be promoted (see, e.g., *En folkgrupp som dör*, 1941; *Landsbygd och storstad*, 1941; *Inga nådegåvor*, 1942; *Rationellt och nationellt*, 1943).

In framing the population question, Familjevärnet emphasised its temporal dimension, i.e., the population question as a problem incorporating the past, the present and the future. Due to the child limit adopted by earlier generations there was a demographic gap with too few persons in child-rearing ages *at that moment*. A rise in current birth rates could not make up for the children 'missing' from earlier, and so the population problem would be reproduced into the future. Besides being a factor explaining the 'crisis', the temporal dimensions posed a pedagogical problem, since the present-day rise in birth rates could result in an 'exaggerated and dangerous optimism' not taking the future consequences – and hence the full extent of the population question – into consideration (Wahlund, 1944b; cf. 'Rekordsiffran', 1944; Hyrenius, 1942). Another risk was that people would get the impression that the population problem would solve itself automatically. Therefore, following the argumentation of the organisation, it was crucial to make people comprehend the temporality of the population question, to learn people to 'think in generations' and to tie their 'sense of responsibility not only to the family unit, but to the people and the future' (Nu kräves handling, 1941, p. 8), thereby changing their attitudes towards population policy measures. To achieve this, an important part of the solution was information, education and propaganda, a triad of concepts discussed further below.

Whereas Väestöliitto and SBF used the concept 'population question' as a self-evident representation of the notion of a too small population, as indicated above, their Swedish counterpart made some attempts to problematise the concept. For instance, it was suggested that the term 'population question' itself had caused some of the negativity concerning population policy issues, as the word indicated conflicting emotions and solutions, thus hampering united action (Nu kräves handling, 1941). Sten Wahlund also acknowledged the spatiality of the 'population question', pointing out that it was mainly from a Swedish perspective that the problem was under-population, and that this specific Swedish problem was of minor significance from a 'planetary point of view' (Wahlund, 1944a). Even if Wahlund thus problematised the concept, he at the same time confirmed its taken-for-granted nationalist bias by declaring that the population question of other countries was of no or negative interest, as the Swedish population would not benefit from over-population outside the national borders. Although the population question was framed as a Swedish matter in terms of causes and solutions, the threat it posed had geopolitical implications: the Swedish population 'crisis' was said to be more severe than elsewhere and thus, the population development in neighbouring countries could affect the political situation within the Nordic countries as a geographical unit (Arrhén, 1943). That the 'inner' and 'outer' aspects of the population question were intertwined were often repeated by Wahlund, arguing for a parallel between defence policy as 'outer preparedness' and population policy as 'inner' (Wahlund, 1941, 1942, 1944d).³⁶ Furthermore, problematising the concept did not mean that the relevance of the 'population question' was questioned as such; on the contrary, the population question was

highlighted as an issue permeating all others, a 'key issue' affecting the shape of domestic as well as foreign policies (Arrhén, 1943, 1946).

6. 2. *Encouraging and controlling reproduction*

Like their Finnish and Finnish-Swedish counterparts, issues relating to women's roles were central for Familjevårnet. To get Swedish women to support Familjevårnet's cause was crucial, one (female) participant at the first population policy conference arranged by the organisation argued, emphasising that the meaning of motherhood for the 'normal, average woman' – including its trials and burdens – should be acknowledged (Konferensen på Jakobsberg, 1941, p. 5). That women should be active within the organisation was mentioned in an internal memo, noting briefly that it should have both male and female representatives.³⁷ However, it should also be noted that one of the main critiques towards the organisation concerned it being too dominated by men (B.-K., 1941; Delila, 1942).

In the member bulletin, the role and situation of women were declared population policy issues of particular concern. Motherhood was idealised for instance by Curt Gyllenswärd, the organisation's expert in paediatrics, arguing that women giving birth to and raising children were 'the truly indispensable, the only ones, performing a deed that cannot be performed by any other one' (Gyllenswärd, 1941, p. 8). Gyllenswärd highlighted the mother's role as caregiver, arguing that a woman did not become mother simply by giving birth but that she must also 'breastfeed and care for her child' (Sommarkursen, 1944, p. 4). The task performed by mothers could therefore not be replaced by collective measures like nurseries. Correspondingly, Gyllenswärd rejected female employment as a valid population policy topic, arguing that the concerns of married employed women were an interest only for a minority and that the natural place for women should be in the domestic sphere (Gyllenswärd, 1941). Many articles likewise underlined the role of the woman as mother and caregiver, arguing that population policy must enable women to 'work in their homes' and support women in raising their children (Hyrenius, 1944; Wahlund, 1943b, 1943a). In this sense, the organisation promoted the nuclear family, with a minimum three children and the father as breadwinner, preferably living on the countryside.

While motherhood was presented as the natural and desired role for women – sometimes explicitly formulated as a prerequisite for the future of the people (Hyrenius, 1944) – it was not exclusively idealised in the sense that it was a duty exceeding all other expectations that a woman might have, or, for that part, that society might have on women. The organisation acknowledged that motherhood and female employment were intertwined with other issues considered part of the population question, such as the relationship between city and countryside, and that re-shaping society as a whole was necessary so that women would want and choose motherhood (Wahlund, 1943b). Even though a proclaimed ideal was the woman as mother and housewife, the organisation did not exclusively take stand for the woman as housemaker. One article, referring an interview with female Member of Parliament Ebon Andersson,³⁸ argued that in order to have children, women should have the right to demand economic as well as social security, meaning that no woman should have to leave work because of marriage and childrearing ('as punishment for motherhood') and that no woman should be forced to work to

support her child. The article also narrated Andersson's criticism of a tendency of blaming women for being 'egoistic' and rejecting motherhood, emphasising that women alone – and especially unmarried or involuntarily childless women – could not be made responsible for the birth rates (Kvinnokrav, 1944).

Reproductive and public health were other issues discussed by the organisation as a part of a population policy package, and various articles called for expanding obstetric care and establishing maternal and paediatric health centres. Infertility gained some attention: one suggestion was that providing infertile couples with medical counselling would be 'a natural part of active population policy' (Söderblom, 1942). Acknowledging involuntary childlessness as part of the population problem – i.e., a medical problem calling for medical solutions – was in line with viewpoints of leading Swedish obstetricians (Nordlund, 2011); Familjevärnet recognised this understanding, albeit prioritised other problem formulations. Abortion, on the other hand, was considered a 'societal evil', its risks recognised as an area where efforts should be made to raise public awareness (50.000 aborter, 1941; En orfsförenings födelse, 1942). However, the organisation did not argue for a stricter legislation, for instance, by questioning the 1938 Abortion Act, but seemed to agree that abortion was a problem to be solved by social reforms (e.g., Aktiv befolkningspolitik, 1941).

Sterilisation was also on the organisation's agenda. It was endorsed not least by vice-president Folke Borg, who saw sterilisation as part of qualitative population policy. At various courses and conferences arranged by the organisation, Borg argued for the benefits of sterilisation, describing it as the 'incomparably most easily accessible, cheapest and most effective way' to control hereditary diseases. Thus, knowledge about the Sterilisation Act ought to be made 'vivid' to everyone, the aversion and fears of sterilisation addressed through 'objective education', so that persons deemed in need of sterilisation would undergo the procedure voluntarily, thereby relieving society from the need to provide for individuals with inherited predisposition for criminality or diseases (Konferensen på Jakobsberg, 1941, p. 5; Sommarkursen, 1943, p. 3). While it was argued that 'inferior' persons – a loosely composed group consisting of the 'feeble-minded' and 'insane' as well as 'congenital criminals' and 'travellers' (*tattare*) – should be prevented from procreating, it was not considered necessary to extend eugenic concerns further, as the Swedes were considered a racially homogenous people at large; the important thing was to 'enable all groups to procreate and, if possible, to procreate equally' (Gyllenswärd, 1941, p. 8). In 1943, Familjevärnet merged with Nationalföreningen för svensk folkvård (National Alliance for Preserving the Swedish People), another population policy organisation founded in 1941, the latter focusing particularly on the quality of the Swedish population and involving many prominent researchers in eugenics (Björkman, 2011; Hatje, 1974). The merging indicates an ideological affinity between the organisations³⁹; nonetheless, it has been noted that after 1943, eugenic concerns and sterilisation were less frequent topics in the bulletin (Nygren, 2002).⁴⁰

6. 3. *Framing population policy*

A main goal for Familjevärnet was to create a family-friendly society, i.e., changing peoples' attitudes towards children and placing the family at the centre of social policy reforms. Many of the suggested reforms were framed as matters of justice and civic rights.

A repeated argument was that child allowances should not be regarded as charity but rather, in line with the basic pensions system, something every citizen was entitled to (Wahlund, 1944c, 1948). With this framing, concerns about birth rates could be downplayed as a factor triggering the reforms; Wahlund, for example, argued that the attempts to equalise between the childless and the child-rich were motivated by justice and should be 'undisputable in a democratic society'. For this reason, the organisation would have stuck to its demands 'even if the conditions within the population question would have had a more fortunate development' (Sommarkursen, 1944, p. 4).

Apart from advocating 'active population policy', in which the redistribution of income between childless and child-rich was an essential piece, the organisation repeatedly stated that it refrained from promoting any particular measures, since their main goal was to foster consensus on the need for population policy as such (Wahlund, 1942). To realise this goal, the organisation set as one of its primary purposes to influence the public through education and propaganda. This task was described in the statutes as 'by various kinds of propaganda make our people aware of the significance of the population question as a matter of life and death for our people', and hence also to raise the awareness of 'each and everyone's responsibility for its solution, for oneself as well as for coming generations'.⁴¹ In the bulletin, the activities organised by Familjevärnet – conferences, courses, exhibitions – were repeatedly discussed with special regard to their ability to reach out to and influence the public. When describing those activities, Familjevärnet used a number of words and expressions, not distinguishing between terms such as 'information', 'education' and 'propaganda'.⁴² This was in line with a contemporary usage found in Sweden and elsewhere in Europe; the concepts formed a sematic field also including words like advertising (Gardeström, 2018). Using advertising to influence the public was not considered suspicious as such, but could be seen as a way of improving democracy and creating knowledgeable citizens (Tistedt, 2019).

Even if Familjevärnet's employment of the word 'propaganda' was consistent with a common usage during the same period, it is clear that the word in some cases was used with hesitancy – especially when used with words like 'natality' or 'population'. One editorial explicitly demarcated against 'natality propaganda' as a valid description of the organisation's undertakings, emphasising that the task rather was to provide 'sober education' (*upplysning*) regarding the state of the population and to create a 'positive mentality' towards the social and economic measures required for preserving and promoting the family (Befolkningsförbundet och 'nativitetspropagandan', 1943). That the term 'natality propaganda' was within quotation marks implies that both the term and the phenomena was considered somewhat deviant (e.g., Johannes, 1943). Also, the effectiveness of such activities was questioned: one article reflecting upon the exhibition as medium concluded that '[a]n exhibition, only following the lines of population propaganda, will easily become monotonous and miss its target', adding that the concepts 'family', 'domesticity' and 'youth' would provide 'great opportunities for variation' (Familjevärn på utställning, 1942, p. 7).

The organisation also made a distinction between engaging in natality propaganda and advocating population policy. An important part of the difference was whether – and how – the individual was targeted. In its rhetoric, Familjevärnet opposed measures directed towards the individual, i.e., measures only urging families to have more children, instead stressing the responsibility of society. 'We do not want to pursue propaganda

directed towards the individual as long as society has not done its part', Wahlund declared at the organisation's annual summer course in 1944, adding that 'our social conscience forbids us to campaign (*propagera*) for increased number of children' as long as many child-rich families were receiving poor relief: 'It is desired children and not propaganda children we want.' (Sommarkursen, 1944, p. 4). On the other hand, propaganda in the sense of changing the opinion into more family-friendly mentalities was considered in line with the 'sober education' forming part of an active population policy (Ur årsberättelsen, 1945).

Besides changing the attitudes, Familjevärnet argued that the informational and educational task was closely related to democracy: that it was crucial that the individual possessed the knowledge required for partaking in matters essential for 'his own, the peoples' and the nation's future', rendering knowledge about the population question both a civic right and a civic duty (Upplysning i befolkningsfrågan, 1943). The framing of population policy as part of democratic undertakings was in many ways intrinsic in the organisation's rhetoric; Swedish population policy was both explicitly and implicitly distinguished from measures promoting natality in dictatorial states (e.g., Nu kräves handling, 1941). This framing was not exclusive for Familjevärnet: the 1935 Population Commission had argued that the aims and ideological basis for Swedish population policy differed from population policy in Germany, being more in line with democratic ideals (Broberg & Tydén, 2005, p. 88). Nonetheless, in the general debates, it was not undisputed whether certain measures were essentially 'undemocratic' or 'semi-Nazi' (Berg, 2009, p. 291), indicating that there was no consensus on the demarcation between the democratically sound and unsound.

Nevertheless, following the argumentation of Familjevärnet, the ideological/democratic framing bestowed Sweden with a specific task: to be the forerunner of population policy endeavours internationally. This was made possible by Sweden not partaking in the war, combined with a national self-perception of Swedes as upholder of democratic values – a position, however, calling for strong and concrete action in order to be realised (Bengtson, 1941b; cf. Några synpunkter, 1944). The population problem was thus not exclusively framed as a Swedish problem, but both the problem and the solution – an active population policy – was conceptualised as an international task:

Once the war will end. We cannot predict the outcome, but we know that when it ends and the world gets back in order, the population crisis will be the greatest, for all civilised nations overshadowing problem. It has to be, for what goes for us, goes for others. I think it is Sweden's great task to show the world that the population question can be solved within the framework of a democratic constitution. (Bengtson, 1941b, p. 2.)

6. 4. *Post-war pronatalism?*

After the war, Familjevärnet continued its activities, yet with less intensity. The immediate post-war years coincided with the Population Committee delivering their final reports and Familjevärnet took upon it to popularise and spread the result of the committee (Red, 1945). At the same time, the organisation was engaged as one of the bodies considering the Committee's proposal, in this function criticising the suggestion to split the financial support for education in population policy matters between several actors and arguing that such task should be bestowed upon *one* organisation, i.e., itself (Central organisation,

1946). The organisation also emphasised that even if many reforms were about to be realised, one must not settle, pointing out a row of additional ‘new’ problems – the divorce rates or the ‘crisis of the home’ following new family and societal structures – calling for attention, whereby the attempts create a family-friendly society must proceed (Wahlund, 1946, 1947; ‘Hemmets kris’, 1947; Skilsmässorna hotar, 1947; Hem och familj, 1947; Familjen måste, 1948). Compared to the early 1940s, a shift in focus can be discerned, with less pessimistic prognoses regarding the ‘population’ and more articles highlighting different aspects of the ‘family’. The organisation also explicitly distanced itself from the more ‘excessive’ rhetoric of previous years, such as the talk of an aging and dying people (Ungdomen räcker ej, 1948).

During the post-war years, Familjevärnet also faced challenges in the form of a strained economy. This had been a recurring issue from the start, but in the late 1940s, the economic hardships were accentuated, forcing the organisation to cut back on its activities.⁴³ The last issue of the bulletin was published in 1949, and in the early 1950s, the organisation was dissolved, vanishing from public debates. For some members, their population policy engagement transformed into international arenas from the late 1940s: statistician Hannes Hyrenius became part of the UN Population Committee, whereas Sten Wahlund and Axel Höjer were engaged in the UN and WHO to work with family planning and public health in Ceylon and India (Berg, 2010; see also Berg et al., [in press](#)). Instead of promoting birth, the issue at stake was birth control – and the irony can be noted that Wahlund, who in the press reports in the early 1940s had been described a successor of Myrdal, a decade later was referred to as a ‘child limitation prophet’ (‘Barnbegränsningsprofet’, 1952).

7. Comparisons between nations and organisations

In terms of conceptualisations, arguments, and metaphors, the rhetoric of the three organisations analysed in this article did not differ significantly from pronatalist organisations elsewhere in Europe. Notions of an ‘aging’ or ‘dying’ people, criticism towards selfish individuals, and appeals to consider children a great national interest were central parts of the rhetoric. Nevertheless, in comparing our findings from the three organisations and their national contexts, we note several possible frameworks and approaches for nuancing pronatalism and maternalism. For example, should the pronatalist ideas and policies endorsed by each organisation be understood in terms of ‘carrot’ or ‘stick’, i.e., as the promotion of positive, family-friendly policies – and in this specific case, with the establishment of the Nordic welfare states as a historic backdrop – or as procreation as an individual’s civic duty towards the nation and society? Was population and family policy based on a notion of the family as a private sphere, or procreation and population as a public concern? How does this relate to notions of womanhood versus motherhood; what did it mean to be a woman or mother in society? Many of these themes involve nationalist ideas, ethnocultural concerns, class dimensions, as well as conceptualisations of the ‘population’. These themes can also be discussed in connection with ideas of individualism and collectivism, or respectively, the relation between state/society and the individual. Although mostly outlined in pairs, the themes should not be understood dichotomously or as mutually exclusive. Rather, they should be understood as spectra or

overlapping phenomena, which sometimes have involved significant tensions or difficult balancing in various historical contexts.

The multifaceted nature of pronatalism and maternalism is also illustrated in the organisations' partly overlapping and partly diverse framing of the 'population question' and population policy, as well as in their activities and how they described and reflected upon them. At first sight, the organisations share a number of essential features: they were founded within a year in 1941–42, with similar purposes – conceptualised in similar wordings – and of similar character; they declared political neutrality and relied on a distinct expert role. However, a more in-depth study reveals some interesting differences concerning the framing and motivation for the organisations' pronatalist endeavours.

The Finnish and Finland-Swedish associations, Västöliitto and SBF, based their agenda on collectivist ideas, and they sought to normalise maternalist values and class homogenisation (i.e., bourgeois family values such as the nuclear family and male breadwinner model). They framed motherhood as the most important role of the woman in accordance with ideas like the motherhood myth and home cult. The Swedish Familjevärnet also framed motherhood as the desired and natural role for women, arguing that population policy measures should be designed to enable women to fill this role. However, it did not uncritically endorse and reproduce the 'motherhood myth', but acknowledged the practical difficulties of being a woman/mother and thus the need for pragmatism in terms of solutions. In other words, while Familjevärnet's core ideas were based on collectivism, it also expressed an understanding for the varying circumstances of individuals. Such a more nuanced or pragmatic approach might be due to Familjevärnet's more heterogeneous character, regarding political sympathies among members as well as gender composition, making it hard to trace a unison 'line' or formal standpoint of the organisation (if such should exist). Here, we should again acknowledge the difficulties of an outright comparison between the organisations due to the character of source material. A publication with identified and multiple authors – such as Familjevärnet's bulletin – is more likely to include disparate voices. It is more difficult to discern a diversity of voices in programmes and brochures published in the organisation's name, or minutes that rarely disclose individual discussants – like the core material of Västöliitto and SBF.

Västöliitto and SBF advocated for positive population policy in line with Myrdalian ideas, which sought to make family-building attractive and attainable. However, the organisations also laid a strong emphasis on procreation as a national and collective duty of individuals and strongly condemned the *breach* of this duty. Västöliitto and SBF hence promoted and portrayed the family as an inherently female and domestic and private environment, while simultaneously framing procreation as a public and political issue. Familjevärnet likewise promoted positive population policy, with the promotion of equality between 'child-rich' and 'childless' at its core. In some respects, its ideas of procreation, family life and population policy were similar to those of Västöliitto and SBF; however, the bulletin allowed a manifold of notions, whereby it is difficult to characterise the organisation's general standpoints. Unlike Västöliitto and SBF, Familjevärnet did not proclaim procreation to be an individual 'duty', but instead emphasised other duties linked to the population question. In general, it argued that people had a responsibility to be informed about the population question; more specifically, childless persons had a duty to sacrifice some of their material wellbeing to partake in the cost of

bringing up children. We thus notice that the organisations' conceptualisations of individual responsibilities differ. We suggest that this ought to be understood in relation to each organisation's framing of the population question and population policy vis-à-vis historical context. Both Västöliitto and SBF related their idea of the 'population question' against external aggression, whereby women's duty to procreate was conceptualised analogously with military service for men. While this analogy occurred within the Swedish organisation as well, it was not a core line of argument: rather, conceptualisations of individual duties were situated within a democratic framework, with 'welfare', 'justice' and 'solidarity' as guiding principles.

Taking note of the historical context is also important when considering the nationalist features of the organisations' pronatalism, not least in relation to the experiences posed by the on-going Second World War. All three organisations initially emphasised and framed population policy and natality as a national issue to be addressed within the nation. They hence took nationalism as a given frame for population policy and saw the demographic development as a cause of the nation and the people. However, combined with ideas about population policy as a defence strategy, this had partly different outcomes in terms of what was to be defended. For Västöliitto, pronatalism and population policy were highly geopolitical issues: they were, in essence, framed as a 'defence strategy' against the aggressions of the Soviet Union. SBF saw pronatalism and population policy as a defence strategy against the pressure of the Finnish majority, but simultaneously also as an internal issue in Swedish Finland: it was a matter of preserving the Finland-Swedish population and culture, and about defending it against its self-inflicted demise. SBF's nationalist ideas and pronatalism thus had a clearly racial or ethnocultural focus. Västöliitto, on the other hand, did not employ explicit ethnic or linguistic demarcations regarding the Finnish population or people; nonetheless, its core ideals like the non-nomadic agrarian lifestyle implicitly excluded groups like the Sami and the Roma from notions of the 'people'. Similarly, Familjevärnet did not explicitly exclude the Swedish Sami from its conceptualisations of the 'people', but rather left them out without a word. Familjevärnet also admitted to the geopolitical implications of the population question and likewise framed population policy as a defence strategy, even if it did not define the external threat as explicitly as the Finnish and Finland-Swedish organisations. It also acknowledged SBF's concerns regarding the Swedish-speaking population in Finland.

However, when it came to Familjevärnet's framing of population policy as a defence issue in relation to the ongoing war, it was not only or primarily the war that called for pronatalism, but also the *absence of war* that enabled it. Democratic and neutral Sweden could provide a guiding principle for the rest of the world (or at least the Western world, i.e., the parts of the world said to deal with the population question as a matter of underpopulation) on how to manage the population question. However, one should not necessarily conclude that such framing of pronatalism as a (potential) transnational issue eliminates nationalist features of the concept. Notions of 'nation' and 'population' can remain uncontested even with frameworks of war and conflict removed, i.e., when pronatalism and population policy are not conceptualised in terms of war, but as peaceful, harmonised co-existence.

Lastly, when discussing the organisations' pronatalism, it is also worth commenting on their respective roles in shaping future population policies and discourses. As mentioned earlier, Västöliitto and SBF continued their activities into (and beyond)

the 1950s, whereas Familjevärnet dissolved as the engagement of many of the prominent members was directed elsewhere, also into international arenas. In terms of viability and life-span of the organisations, Väestöliitto and SBF were undeniably more successful in actively pursuing population policy, ranging from grassroots-level activity to influencing national decision-making. Väestöliitto established itself as a prominent expert organisation on a national level; SBF, for its part, tended to the interest of Swedish Finland with a more limited scope of activities and connections. A key to this durability could be explained by the two organisations' character of umbrella organisations, whereas the Swedish organisation was more dependent on the commitment of individual members. Väestöliitto, gained state funding, as did SBF, albeit less, which of course also favoured more long-term activities. However, when it comes to shaping future population policies in terms of establishing practices as well as discourses and values, the Swedish organisation did not 'fail': many of the reforms and legitimising attitudes that it promoted have since then been established parts of Swedish family and welfare policy. Familjevärnet's overlaps with the Population Committee of the 1940s also exemplifies the close and intertwined relations of actors and functions involved in constructing the politics of the 'welfare state'.

To sum up, our findings indicate that conceptual history together with a comparative transnational perspective are a productive approach for scrutinising and historicising concepts such as pronatalism and maternalism. Situating key concepts and discourse within historical contexts and connecting them with the rhetoric and activities of historical actors enables highlighting varieties and nuances in the practises and ideologies underlying attempts to promote reproduction.

Notes

1. In her in-depth study of population policy and debates in 1930s and 40s Sweden, Ann-Katrin Hatje (1974), takes note of the organisation but does not systematically investigate their workings as population policy actors, but refers to them as an extra-parliamentary pressure group. All in all, this description is reproduced by other scholars. The most thorough study on the organisation is a bachelor's thesis (Nygren, 2002).
2. All translations from the source material are our own.
3. Väestöliitto and SBF have archives deposited in the premises of Väestöliitto and at the National Archive of Finland, respectively; Svenska Familjevärnet has no central archive available but a collection of printed material is located at the National Library of Sweden. In addition to this, source material used in this article have been collected from Familjevärnet member Elof Åkesson's personal archive (Gothenburg University Library) and the archive of the Swedish Employers' Association (Centre for Business History in Stockholm).
4. Full title: Svenska Familjevärnet. Medlemsblad för Riksförbundet Svenska Familjevärnet (R.S. F); subtitle changed in 1943: Medlemsblad för Befolkningsförbundet [Svenska] Familjevärnet. In 1949, the bulletin was renamed Social Aspekt (Social Aspect); two issues were published before it was discontinued.
5. On the Soviet Union, see Hoffmann, 2000; Mitsuyoshi, 2012. On France, Italy and Germany, see Camiscioli, 2001, 2009; Forcucci, 2010; as well as Quine, 1996. On Spain, see Nash, 1991. On the UK and the US, see Koven & Michel, 1990; Lovett, 2007. On the Nordic countries, see Broberg & Roll-Hansen, 2005; Haavet, 2006.
6. With the exception of Åland Islands, which is a monolingually Swedish-speaking, autonomous and demilitarised region.

7. During the first years, there were several versions of the organisation's name. In 1942, it was decided that the name Riksförbundet Svenska Familjevärnet [National Alliance Svenska Familjevärnet] would change into Befolkningsförbundet – Svenska Familjevärnet [Population League – Svenska Familjevärnet]. (Beslut, 1942).
8. Väestöliitto, SBF and Familjevärnet referred to each other as sister-organisations and collaborated to some degree, but a closer examination of the organisations' inter-relationships falls beyond the scope of this article. The topic is scrutinised more thoroughly in My Klockar Linder's ongoing research project 'Transnational pronatalism: Collaboration and family policy exchanges in the Baltic Sea area in the 1940s' founded by The Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies.
9. Wahlund was, among other things, professor of statistics. He was formerly employed at Swedish Institute for Race Biology; member of parliament's first chamber 1944–58 (Agrarian Party); president of CSA (Centralorganisationen för social arbete; National association for social work). In the 1950s and 60s, he was engaged by the UN to work with family planning and birth control in India.
10. V. J. Sukselainen held degrees in sociology and economics. As politician, he led the Agrarian League during 1945–64 and served twice as Prime Minister in the 1950s and 1960s, among other roles. During 1954–71, he led the Finnish Social Insurance Institution (Kansaneläkelaitos).
11. Heikki von Hertzen was a lawyer and had worked in the banking industry prior to joining Väestöliitto. In addition, he was a central figure in Finnish housing policy, and he served as the chair of the Finnish Housing Foundation (1951–76).
12. Harry Federley was professor of genetics at the University of Helsinki and lead figure in Folkhälsan, the Public Health Association of Swedish Finland. Federley was a strong proponent of racial hygiene. In 1929, he led the committee that prepared the Finnish sterilisation law (enacted in 1935), and he was consulted as an expert in the Sterilisation and Abortion Committees in the 1940s.
13. Per Johannes was an elementary school teacher and author with political assignments on the municipal level. He was one of the initiators of Familjevärnet and was, alongside Wahlund, one of the persons most commonly associated with the organisation.
14. Folke Borg was zoologist and author of the book *A Dying People* from 1935.
15. The organisational structure was described thoroughly in the statutes. National Library of Sweden: Svenska familjevärnet: Collection of printed material: Utdrag ur stadgar för Riksförbundet Svenska Familjevärnet antagna vid rikskongress i Stockholm den 2 juni 1941 [Excerpt from the charter for National Alliance Svenska Familjevärnet approved at the national congress in Stockholm, 2 June 1941].
16. Professor and physician specialised in paediatrics.
17. Archive of Väestöliitto (AoV): Väestöliitto, Minutes 9 December 1940 (consultation meeting). Appendix A (dated 19 November 1940): Letter sent by the Association of Finnish Culture and Identity to Finnish social and health policy associations regarding collaboration in population policy issues; Archive of Väestöliitto (AoV): Väestöliitto, Minutes 18 December 1940 (meeting of the Central Commission on Population Policy). Appendix A1 (dated 20 December 1940 (sic)): Letter describing future activities.
18. Ole Eklund served as SBF's secretary 1942–45 and board member until 1945. He was an adjunct professor in botany at the University of Helsinki. He led the Swedish department of the Finland–Soviet Union Society; he was hence a notable Finland-Swedish Communist.
19. The National Archives of Finland (NARC): Svenska Befolkningsförbundet i Finlands arkiv (SBFs arkiv), 8 Diverse papper (1942–1985): Eklund (1942). Svenska befolkningsförbundet i Finland: En presentation och ett program [The Swedish Population Federation in Finland. A presentation and a programme].
20. AoV: Väestöliitto, Minutes 18 December 1940, Appendix A1.
21. NARC: SBFs arkiv, 8 Diverse papper (1942–1985): Eklund (1942).
22. Gapminder: 'Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)'; Gapminder: 'Infant mortality (rate per 1,000 live births)'. <<https://www.gapminder.org/>> (22.3.2019).

23. Official Statistics of Finland (OSF): 'Number of deaths of children has halved in 20 years'. In e-publication Causes of Death. <http://www.stat.fi/til/ksyyt/2017/ksyyt_2017_2018-12-17_kat_007_en.html> (17.5.2019).
24. Archive of Västöliitto (AoV): Västöliitto, Minutes 8 January 1941 (meeting of the Central Commission on Population Policy). Appendix C: Experts' report of the Public Health Division to the CCP; Archive of Västöliitto (AoV): Västöliitto, Minutes 4 January 1945 (board meeting). Appendix 1: Action plan for Västöliitto's public health department.
25. AoV: Västöliitto, Minutes 8 January 1941, Appendix C.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. The National Archives of Finland (NARC): Svenska Befolkningsförbundet i Finlands arkiv, 1 Beredningskommitténs protokoll (1941–1942): Preparatory committee, Minutes 5 June 1941; The National Archives of Finland (NARC): Svenska Befolkningsförbundet i Finlands arkiv, 1 Beredningskommitténs protokoll (1941–1942): Preparatory committee, Minutes 1 April 1942. Appendix I: Charter draft; The National Archives of Finland (NARC): Svenska Befolkningsförbundet i Finlands arkiv, 1 Beredningskommitténs protokoll (1941–1942): Preparatory committee, Minutes 1 April 1942. Appendix I: Charter draft.
29. AoV: Västöliitto, Minutes 18 December 1940, Appendix A1.
30. NARC: SBFs arkiv, 8 Diverse papper (1942–1985): Eklund (1942).
31. No governmental policies were directed against the Swedish-speaking minority, unlike other minorities in Finland.
32. Ibid.
33. AoV: Västöliitto, Minutes 8 January 1941, Appendix C.
34. Torsten G. Aminoff was a journalist and politician, among others. During the 1930s–1960s, he served as the editor-in-chief for Swedish right-wing periodicals; during 1960–75, he worked as a political journalist for the largest Swedish newspaper Hufvudstadsbladet. In the 1960s, he served as MP for the Swedish People's Party.
35. National Library of Sweden (NLS): Svenska familjevärnet: Collection of printed material: 'Utdrag ur stadgar för Riksförbundet Svenska Familjevärnet antagna vid rikskongress i Stockholm den 2 juni 1941'. [Excerpt from statutes for Swedish Population and Family Federation adopted at national congress in Stockholm, 2 June 1941].
36. Overall, the organisation relied heavily on a militarist language, with recurrent analogies to war, military strategies and military equipment. The militarist language is also discernible in the organisation's name, one of the meanings of 'värn' being arrangements to defend or protect from danger (e.g., parapet, trenches).
37. Gothenburg University Library: Collection of scripts: Elof Åkesson's personal archive: Memo nr. 1 regarding the working committee of Svenska Familjevärnet [undated]
38. Coincidentally, at this time, there were two members of Parliament named Ebon Andersson, one representing the Social Democrats and one representing the conservative party. Both were engaged in issues concerning women, such as female employment and equal pay for male and female teachers (Ebon Andersson/Conservative Party), mothers aid and vacation homes for women (Ebon Andersson/Social Democratic party). The use of 'Mrs.' in the article indicates that the person referred to is Social Democrat Ebon Andersson who later also became vice president of Familjevärnet.
39. Gothenburg University Library: Collection of scripts: Elof Åkesson's personal archive: Letter from Gösta Häggqvist, dated 14 May 1943.
40. Also compared with pamphlets written previous years by persons involved in the organisation (e.g., Borg, Hyrenius), the eugenic features of Familjevärnet as an organisation were less prominent.
41. NLS: Svenska familjevärnet: Collection of printed material: 'Utdrag ur stadgar' (2 June 1941).
42. One frequently used word was *upplysning* which directly translated into English would be 'enlightenment' but should here be understood as educational activities or the spreading of information and knowledge aimed at raising public awareness in different topics. (E.g., Björklund, 2012, p. 45).

43. Centrum för näringslivshistoria [Centre for Business History]: Svenska arbetsgivarföreningen [Swedish Employers' association, SAF]: P1:4, correspondence: Letter from Sten Wahlund to the board of The Swedish Employers' Association, dated 12 March 1951.

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